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June 18, 1988

William Messenger, Unit Chief  
Pre-Remedial Unit  
United States Environmental Protection Agency  
5 HR 11  
230 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60604

Dear Mr. Messenger:

I enclose a fairly detailed article from the June 16 issue of the "Highland Park News", a local Pioneer Press newspaper. As yet I have no information about who might have been the engineering firm developer Spatz has relied upon for his assessment that the Highland Park Landfill and its adjacent terrain are suitable for housing and a hotel or senior care residence and supermarket. I will attempt to find out, and if I am successful, I will share that information with you.

You may notice that the Lake County Health Department has given a conditional go-ahead. Further, a plan review is set for June 28, 1988 in City Hall, Highland Park.

As further information comes into my possession I will forward it to you. Please keep me informed as your plans progress.

Very sincerely yours,

Deloris S. Axelrod

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Pre-Remedial

EPA Region 5 Records Ctr.



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# Landfill tests to precede development

By Leslie Ator  
Assistant Managing Editor

A real estate developer and two agencies are involved in testing the old municipal landfill on the grounds of the Highland Park Country Club for hazardous wastes or other dangerous chemicals.

Bill Spatz, board chairman of Spatz & Co., Northbrook, who plans to build residences on the landfill, said Tuesday—results of laboratory tests he had performed on soil samples from the landfill reveal no hazardous or toxic materials.

"The lab test people and the engineers (whom Spatz hired to take the samples) have told us there's nothing to stop us from putting on there what we want," Spatz said. He said he doesn't yet know what type of residential units would be built onto the landfill.

**SPATZ & CO.** announced in mid-April it had contracted to buy and develop 128 acres of the club property and 38 acres adjoining it at Ill. 22 and U.S. 41.

The landfill — the city's municipal landfill before it was closed in 1970 — consists of 25 acres located immediately west of the East Skokie Drainage Ditch, Marty Rukin, chairman of the Highland Park Environmental Control Commission (ECC), said Tuesday.

Spatz said his engineers dug about 40 to 45 feet below the landfill's surface to obtain the samples. A layer of dirt and clay extended down about 15 to 18 feet over the landfill, he said.

"The materials found down there are normal waste materials," he said. "They contained no dangerous substances and the usual amount of methane. . . which is normal for decomposition." Spatz said he would have further tests conducted

on the methane gas "to see if it might be considered dangerous."

**NO WATER TESTS** were done, he said, because the engineers didn't run into any water tables, underground streams or large amounts of ground water.

"We took tests of all the materials we hit in a straight line," he said. He said the test results would be made public.

Rukin said Tuesday Spatz planned to send him results of the soil tests so that the ECC can review them.

Colin Thacker, director of the environmental health division of the Lake County Department of Public Health, said Tuesday routine tests on various chemicals in the East Skokie Drainage Ditch at the landfill May 18 showed "fine" results "as long as the water is not used for drinking." The tests revealed no leachate — contaminated water — he said. Results on tests for several metals weren't yet back from the laboratory, he added.

**HE SAID HE** would recommend construction of homes and condominiums adjacent to but not on the landfill, "ideally, with public water and sewer. If a development were going to come in, I would ask that testing air samples for methane gas be done." He said the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) would do that.

The landfill began operations in the late 1930s, Bob Casteel, public information officer for the Illinois EPA, said Tuesday. Lake County Department of Public Health records show the landfill received refuse from households in Highland Park and surrounding communities, construction demolition waste and treated sludge — which is sewage — from the North Shore Sanitary District, according to Casteel.

He said a preliminary assessment done by the Illinois EPA last December on the landfill under the state's four-year-old Clean Illinois program concluded that there were no indications of hazardous waste and that the site is not causing pollution.

However, the agency recommended a site inspection through a federal contractor "only because of plans for development of the area into home sites and condos," Casteel said.

**NO DATE HAS** been set for the site inspection, which has been given medium priority. The contractor will bore for samples, Casteel said. "It will do nothing more than verify the observations made in this preliminary assessment," he said.

No legal prohibition exists on the construction of homes or businesses on top of or adjacent to landfills, Casteel said. However, he added, "I think there would be general consensus from people here in the office that we don't think it's necessarily a good idea to build structures, particularly homes, on top of landfill sites. . . because of environmental concerns, like leachate and methane gas, which gives the possibility of an explosion. There could be structural problems — cracks in foundations."

City Clerk David Fairman, said Wednesday the city will have testing conducted on the landfill as part of the agreement the city council is proposing with Epstein Civil Engineering, Inc., Chicago, for the first phase of the Skokie Corridor Storm Water Master Plan, prepared earlier by Epstein. The landfill is in the master plan area.

Approval of the agreement, which carries a budget amount of roughly \$190,200, will be on the June 27 council agenda, officials said.

## Interest shown in project

By Leslie Ator  
Assistant Managing Editor

At least 100 firm requests for residential units have been received by Spatz & Co., which plans to develop more than 165 acres at the Highland Park Country Club, the company's board chairman said Tuesday.

Spatz & Co. announced in mid-April it had contracted to buy and develop 128 acres of the club's roughly 156 acres plus 38 acres adjoining it at Ill. 22 and U.S. 41.

"We'll be sending out letters to people who have requested units probably next week," Bill Spatz, the firm's board chairman, said. "We've gotten a lot. People called representing other people, but I would say we've had legitimate requests for at least 100 units. We've had requests for information from more."

**SPATZ SAID COMPLETION** of the first residential units — houses and condominiums could be — "if all went well" — in 1990, "since so much work with the flood plain and the lake (retention pond) level needs to be done. We could do some building in 1989. The bulk of the work will start in 1990.

"Part of our plan is that we have to create a 26-acre lake and get the city to put in pumps," Spatz said. "The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Illinois EPA have to approve this. Then we dig it and level it. And that all takes time. We expect that will run us into 1990. The whole development should be underway by 1990.

"I'd like to keep the golf course open for the '89 season and the '90 season," Spatz said, confirming what he had said in mid-April.

**HE SAID HIS** company has retained the Balsamo-Olson Group, Oak Brook, as the land planner for both the country club acreage and the 38 acres. Balsamo-Olson's five proposed land use plans will be ready next week, when Spatz & Co. will choose one for presentation to city officials, Spatz said. The five plans all focus on residential development for the country club land and commercial/residential for the 38 acres, he said.

The possibility of a hotel or a residence for healthy senior citizens also will be explored, Spatz said.

The acreage east of the East Skokie Drainage Ditch will include higher-end, lower-density, residential zoning, Spatz said, while the area west of that waterway "is a question mark. Any possible use you could think of probably could go there — congregating care, retail, higher-density condos, a hotel."

While Balsamo-Olson is talking to a food store chain about the possibility of locating on the property, no leases would be signed for a while, Spatz said. An announcement on the food store might come in the fall, he said.

Spatz will attend a pre-application meeting of the Highland Park Plan Commission June 28. "This will be our first time to make a (presenta-

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## • Project *Continued from page 7*

tion) and to get a reaction from the city," he said. "We'll find out if we're going in the right direction."

He said he has talked to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers about preserving a roughly 13-acre parcel of wetlands on the 38-acre tract. "If anything, we plan on upgrading the wetlands," Spatz said. "There may be a road there. The master plan the

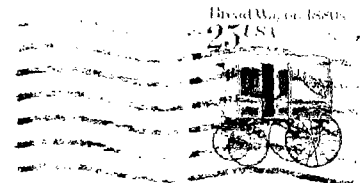
city has adopted shows a road cutting through the wetlands. The Army Corps . . . effectively has control over this land. Since . . . we're upgrading it, we don't expect to have an issue on it."

Spatz said those interested in the development seem to be North Shore empty-nesters.





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